

LIMITED RE-OPENING TO THE PUBLIC

Our top priority is the health of visitors and our staff during the current COVID-19 crisis. A gradual approach to re-opening our office is safest method for our the public and our employees. In-person access to our office will be limited as we continue to promote the use of electronic communication to assist you. Please be mindful of the CDC guidelines as well as the state's health guidelines as we will be following all operational best practices and safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

- **Services**

- Our virtual office is open from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.
- Most services provided by this office can be fulfilled by telephone (410.313.2133), email (HowardCountyROW@registers.maryland.gov), online chat (<http://registers.maryland.gov/main/howard.html>), fax (410.313.3409), mail, drop box delivery, or our online services (www.registers.maryland.gov) and we strongly encourage you to utilize these services.
- A limited number of essential matters may be handled in person by appointment only.
- Contact us and we will be happy to answer your questions and assist you with the necessary forms.

- **Appointments**

- Our office is closed to walk-in service.
- Individuals who believe their requests cannot be met remotely may contact our office to schedule an appointment.
 - We will schedule appointments for one-hour timeframes starting at 9:00 AM and the last appointment beginning at 3:00 PM.
 - We will allow only one visitor at a time due to limited space and reduced staff.
 - We will advise what will be required for your situation to serve you more expeditiously.

- **Pleadings**

- We are accepting most filings by email and fax until further notice.
 - Original Wills must be delivered.
 - Staff will continue to process pleadings in a timely fashion.
- If you prefer to drop off any paperwork, you are free to do so. Our office hours at 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM Monday through Friday.

- **Public Workstation and Research Area**

- Open by appointment only.

- **Security**

- When you arrive at the courthouse, inform the Sheriff's deputies that you have an appointment with the Register of Wills.
- The Sheriff's deputies will ask you a brief questionnaire, require that you wear a facial covering, and use a contactless thermometer to check your temperature. You will then proceed through a metal detector.

- Social distancing of at least 6 feet from other individuals in the building will be enforced.
- **Website**
 - Please visit our website for current updates and for further information including publications, FAQ, Forms, Legal Notices, Estate Search, Claims Search and Invoice Payment.
- **Orphans' Court**
 - The Orphans' Court for Howard County is meeting remotely on a weekly basis to consider matters before it. Remote court proceedings are being scheduled to be conducted using the Zoom meeting platform. As space is severely limited in our courtroom, it is logistically impossible to hold in-person hearings for the foreseeable future.